

Providence Community Library Annual Meeting

September 16, 2009

The meeting was held in the community room of the Rochambeau Library, 708 Hope Street in Providence, at 5:45pm.

1. Welcome and Call to order

The meeting was called to order by PCL President Marcus Mitchell at 5:45pm. Marcus welcomed all board members, staff and public to the meeting.

Secretary Linda Kushner took a roll call of the board members, noting that there were 17 present and there was a quorum.

Present: Christian Caldarone, Harriet Frank, Dale Gorton, Althea Graves, Alan Gunther, Gilda Hernandez, Sister Ann Keefe, Linda Kushner, Rochelle Lee, Mark McKenney, Marcus Mitchell, Alix Ogden, Patricia Raub, Maureen Romans, Ellen Schwartz, Sharon Simpson, Ken Wise

Marcus Mitchell asked the board members to introduce themselves.

2. Correction of minutes from 7/22/09

Ken Wise noted that the \$1000 raised by Fox point Friends was not raised solely from T-Shirt sales. The minutes of 7/22/09 were corrected to show this fact.

3. Elections of Officers and board elected members

Mark McKenney moved the nomination of the following people:

Marcus Mitchell (President)
Patricia Raub (Vice President)
Linda Kushner (Secretary)
Ellen Schwartz (Treasurer)
Sister Ann Keefe
Gilda Hernandez

The motion was 2nded by Rochelle Lee and passed unanimously.

4. President's Report and committee appointments

Marcus Mitchell noted that there are currently 5 committees and various ad-hoc committees will be forming in the future.

Appointments to the Standing committees are:

Fiscal – Ellen Schwartz (Chair), Alix Ogden

Personnel – Patricia Raub (Chair), Alan Gunther, Sharon Simpson

Friends – Maureen Romans (Chair), Patricia Raub, Harriet Frank, Althea Graves, Dale Gorton

Facilities – Rochelle Lee (Chair), Christian Caldarone, Peter Karczmar

Development – Linda Kushner (Chair), Sister Ann Keefe, Gilda Hernandez

Marcus noted that there are currently 19 board members. The board has the capacity for 25 members. Open seats yet to be filled include representatives from the Olneyville and Washington Park Friends groups, a community appointment by the Mayor and three nominations by the board.

Marcus spoke about funding, noting that the PCL needs to raise \$570,000 to make its budget, and also briefly introduced Development Director Steve Kumins. Marcus emphasized the fact that the libraries are “community libraries” that should meet the needs of their specific communities. Also, he emphasized the need for the organization to make strong connections with the youth population.

Marcus Mitchell extended thanks to Patricia Raub, Ellen Schwartz and Linda Kushner for all the time and work they’ve contributed.

He thanked attorneys Jay Glasson, Bob Brooks, Avital Chatto and Lynette Labinger for the services they have contributed to the PCL, free of charge.

He also thanked Karen McAninch, for all of her work as the PCL’s union representative. Patricia Raub moved that this be made a formal vote of thanks and it was passed unanimously.

5. Executive Director’s Report

Executive Director Ann Robinson reported that staffing is just about completed.

Maria Cotto was hired as a new Children’s Librarian at Knight Memorial Library.

A Deputy Director, Laura Marlane, formerly Director of the Central Falls Free Public Library, has been hired and starts on Monday, September 21st. Out of all the candidates interviewed, she was the best choice and has prior directorial experience, technical expertise and Rhode Island connections.

David Dvorchak, Administrative Assistant, started work on Monday, September 14th.

Laura Marlane, formerly Director of the Central Falls Free Public Library, has been hired and starts on Monday, September 21st. Out of all the candidates interviewed, she was the best choice and has prior directorial experience, technical expertise and Rhode Island connections.

Ann also introduced Maria Melvin (Human Resources Manager), Sue Gibbs (Business Director) and Dhane Whiteing (Mt Pleasant and Regional Library Supervisor). Ann extended thanks to all the staff members, as well.

Two custodial staff members are going to be hired to replace the cleaning company now servicing the branches in an effort to reduce costs.

In terms of outreach, Carolina Briones is supervising the PCL's Americorps (through Ready to Learn Providence) program which consists of 6 members who will be working with children at Knight Memorial (Veronica Burgos and Maria Perez), South Providence (Rosemary Cabrera and Monica Luna), Mt. Pleasant (Sherley Fleurima) and Smith Hill (Emma Gross). Carolina is also offering programs in conjunction with National Hispanic Heritage Month. Librarians have been visiting schools to ensure that children have library cards and the Rhode Island Family Literacy Initiative continues to offer classes at Mt. Pleasant and Rochambeau.

Eleven staff teams (noted in attached Exec. Director's report) have been formed in an effort to improve communication and customer service.

Cradle to Crayons story time is now being offered at all libraries. "Banned Book Week" will be celebrated from September 26th to October 3rd with library displays and a press release.

Two significant donations were noted. The Providence Journal donated 1,400 books and audio visual materials that will be divided amongst the nine libraries. "After School Advantage" computer labs were donated by GTECH and will be located at Wanskuck, Fox Point and Mt. Pleasant. There will be a press conference / celebration on October 29th at 3:30 at the Wanskuck library to celebrate the installation of the computer lab there.

Envisionware, which allows the libraries to better manage their public printers, has been installed at all locations. Stephanie Chausse is creating a staff home page using Drupal software to improve communication.

Rochelle Lee asked if the official price for copies was twenty cents.

Ann explained that this is the amount needed to recoup the PCL's costs.

Harriett Frank asked if the E-Teen program would be continued.

Ann answered that Yes, it will, PCL has applied for funding.

6. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Ellen Schwartz distributed copies of the PCL's Business and Accounting Policies, Income Statement as of August 31st, 2009 and another related statement, which are attached to these minutes. Ellen noted that while the City of Providence has covered the PCL's payroll and contributed \$640,000 to the organization as of August 31st. Despite this, the PCL continues to operate as frugally as possible, and gratefully takes advantage of volunteers and donations whenever they are available.

A vote was taken on whether to accept Ellen's report, as well as Business / Accounting Policies and Procedures. All were in favor.

7. Development Director's Report

Development Director Steve Kumins stressed that because the PCL has only been in existence for two and a half months, development is "getting started". While donations have come in already, more money will start coming in earnest by early 2010.

Development work is being focused on foundations, corporations and individuals. To this end, the PCL has applied to the Emma Harris Foundation for \$10,000 to be used to continue the E-Teen program. There has also been an application to the June Rockwell Levy Foundation, for \$25,000 to go to general operating expenses.

GTECH and the Providence Journal have both contributed large in-kind donations. A number of other large corporations have been contacted and meetings will be set to discuss funding.

A mailing list for our general Appeal of 1,900 names has been put together. It will be expanded to 2,500. Board members are encouraged to provide Steve with names to add.

A major high dollar fundraiser is being planned for late winter with a series of low dollar events to follow in the spring.

All board members are encouraged to contribute a "meaningful" donation to the PCL. The emphasis is on 100% of the members contributing rather than the amount of the donations, as many foundation and corporate funders inquire about board giving.

Sister Ann Keefe asked if there is a specific plan in place to meet fundraising goals.

Steve Kumins: replied; One will be formulated by the Development Committee

Mark McKenney suggested that a Public Relations committee would be helpful.

8. Facilities Report (Business Director)

Business Manager Sue Gibbs noted that Alan Sepe, Acting Director of the Department of Public Property for the City of Providence, will be arranging assessments of the needs of each library building. Mike Nickerson has been making his own list all of the major issues in each building, to compare to that of the city.

We are currently renting space from the Olneyville Housing Corporation at 220 Manton Avenue to house our Tech Services department. The IT offices at Knight Memorial have also been renovated and moved into.

A staff phone directory has been prepared by David Dvorchak and will be sent out shortly. We are formulating an Emergency Disaster Plan to comply with state laws. Beacon Mutual reviewed our operations and safety programs and confirmed that they are in compliance. A used 1999 Ford pickup truck was purchased for Mike Nickerson to use, it also has plowing capabilities.

9. Report on Friends Activities

Dale Gorton informed us that Ken Wise, of the Fox Point Friends, has set up a “google group” for all of the Friends in order to improve communications. The Friends have also been selling t-shirts at the Hope Street Farmer’s Market and at the Pawtucket Arts Festival

Fox Point held their annual meeting and also donated CD cases to the library.

Knight Memorial is meeting tonight and will have an open house on October 24th, featuring a presentation on the history of the Knight family.

Mount Pleasant will be holding a Fall membership drive, a Thanksgiving raffle and a December tag sale.

Olneyville will be holding a book sale and a Fall Festival.

Rochambeau is hosting the PCL board meeting tonight and will be having a book / bake sale from October 5th until October 10th.

Smith Hill will be holding a book / bake sale at the end of October.

South Providence has formed and will be meeting soon.

Wanskuck will be holding planting workshop.

Washington Park is in the process of formation.

10. By-laws

Linda Kushner presented proposed by-law amendments (see attachment). Under our bylaws, any proposed amendment must be presented at two consecutive meetings. The amendments will be discussed again and voted on at the Oct Board meeting,

11. New Business

Marcus Mitchell noted that on October 29th at Wanskuck, there will be a press conference and celebration of the installation of the GTECH “After School Advantage” lab.

12. Public Comment

Denise Brophy suggested that Headers or footers of PCL documents directed to staff should contain confidentiality policy”

Response: It will be taken into consideration.

Gil Mason asked that correct library phone numbers be disseminated to the public, some numbers do not work or go to the PPL.

Response: They will be and any problems with the phone numbers are currently being addressed.

Gil Mason expressed concern that the change from contracting out cleaning might reduce the quality of cleaning at Rochambeau library.

Response: This issue is being considered from a system wide perspective and we think we can save a great deal of money for PCL without lowering cleaning standards

Denise Brophy asked if working in Providence be substituted for living in Providence as far as the Board residency requirement is concerned?"

Response: No.

Denise Brophy asked if it is legally necessary for fire exit strategies to be posted in all buildings?

Response: Yes it is, and it is part of our Emergency Disaster Plan, all buildings will be brought up to compliance.

Linda Kushner extended Thanks to Brown University used furniture department for their generous contribution of furniture to PCL.

Mark McKenney – extended Thanks to Marcus Mitchell, the Library Reform Group and the Friends groups.

13. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm.

Respectfully submitted

Linda J. Kushner

Secretary of the Board